

Safety Shoe Care Tips

Protective footwear worn in the workplace is designed to protect the foot from physical hazards such as falling objects, stepping on sharp objects, heat & cold, wet & slippery surfaces, and exposure to corrosive chemicals. As a user, you should know the risks in your workplace & when selecting footwear, consider the safety hazards in your work area. This will help you select the right protective footwear. Ask your safety officer what protective footwear & other personal protective equipment (PPE) is required meeting EN or BIS standard.

When purchasing new protective footwear, it's important to get the **right fit & comfort** so they will not cause calluses, in grown toe nails, or simply tired feet that are common among workers who spend most of their working time standing or do a lot of walking. Although these may not be considered as occupational injuries, they can have serious consequences for health & safety at the workplace. They can cause discomfort, pain & fatigue. Fatigue can cause a worker an injury affecting the muscles & joints. Also, a worker who is tired & suffering pain is less alert & more likely to act unsafely, which can cause an accident.

Before wearing new shoes or boots on the job, wear them at home until you're sure they fit well. Keep them clean until it is decided they fit & you are keeping them, that way there should not be a problem exchanging them for a different size.

What Should I know about Safety Footwear?

- If you are at risk for foot injury at your workplace, you should wear the appropriate safety/protective footwear.
- If foot protection is required in your workplace, your employer should implement a complete foot safety protection program including: selection, fit testing, training, maintenance, and inspection of footwear.
- Safety footwear is designed to protect feet against a wide variety of injuries. Impact, compression, and puncture are the most common types of foot injury.
- Choose footwear according to the hazards in your workplace.
- Ensure that the footwear has the proper sole for the working conditions.
- Use metatarsal protection (top of the foot between the toes & ankle) where there is a potential for injury.

What Built-in Protection Features Come in Safety Footwear?

- High-cut (Ankle) shoes or boots provide ankle support & keep sparks, molten metals, and chemicals from getting into the footwear.
- Footwear with 200 J Steel/Composite toe-cap, will absorb the blow if a heavy object falls or rolls on the foot. It protects from compression injury too.
- Steel/fabric (Kevlar) midsoles protect the foot against penetration by sharp objects.

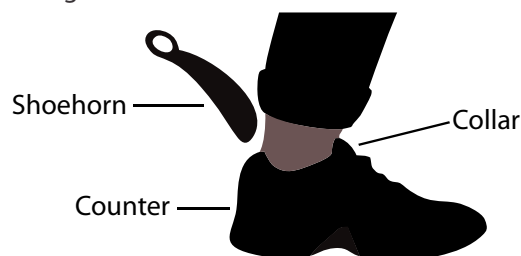
- Non-slip footwear prevents the wearer from slipping on certain surface type.
- Insulated footwear provides protection in cold temperatures.

Tip #1 Give rest to Footwear

Did you know during a normal day your feet produce over a ¼ cup of sweat & up to a 1/2 cup when active? You can extend the life of leather safety shoes by drawing sweat out of your shoes; re-awaken the shoe's natural structural memory; and prevent the leather from wrinkling & cracking by rotating.

Tip #2 Rotate Your Shoes

Shoes need a day off. If you want your leather safety shoes to last longer, never wear them for two consecutive days. This will also avoid fungal infection to your feet as moist footwear is breeding ground for fungus.



Tip #3 Use a Shoe Horn

Always use a shoe horn when putting on your shoes. This saves the heel collar & counter from unnecessary wear & tear.

Tip #4 Maintenance

We highly recommend cleaning your shoes on a regular basis, depending on frequency of use. The cleaning method depends on the shoe's material. Leather can be polished & conditioned with a leather lotion applied with a soft cloth. Suede looks best when brushed; although special suede brushes are available, a clean soft toothbrush works just as well. Do not use worn out toothbrush.



Polishing Smooth Leather in a Nutshell

1. Clean the shoes with a dry brush to get the dirt off the top. Never use any type of cleaner that contains an acid or a detergent as both are damaging to leather & will age the shoe. Detergent destroys the natural oils in leather.
2. Condition the leather to soften & to replace the leather's natural oils. We recommend to use Kiwi Conditioner or any good quality conditioner containing lanolin.

3. Use paste, wax or cream polish to shine your shoes. Make sure the polish matches the shoes. Use a cream a shade lighter than the shoe to cover scratches. Neutral is the "color" for light colored shoes. Cream or paste polish moisturizes fine leather, keeps it flexible, and soaks into the leather to allow leather to breathe. Wax polish shines leather better than cream. Avoid liquid polish, although it puts a fast shine on your shoes it can dry out & crack the leather. You can apply the polish with a soft, clean polishing rag; old socks will work fine. You can also use a horse hair brush instead of a cloth.
4. Allow the shoes to dry (about 10 minutes) then buff the shoe with a polishing brush-- preferably horsehair -- and use a soft clean cloth to bring out a high luster.
5. Weatherproof your safety shoes. A protective spray (3M) is an excellent way to protect your shoes from water, snow, mud, and spills. The best way to protect your shoes is to wipe the leather with a damp cloth, following the instructions on the protector spray. Spray your shoes before wearing, and on a regular basis thereafter.
6. Suede can be cleaned with a clean soft brush (like a toothbrush) to remove stains & dirt. Also special brass-bristle brushes are available to raise the nap after cleaning. A protective finish (like Scotchgard™ Leather Protector for Suede & Nubuck) sprayed on suede shoes will help repel water & stains.
7. Nubuck – (brushed leather similar to suede, but with a finer nap) treat the shoes with water repellent, use rubber-bristle brush (not nylon).

It's important to avoid drying them near a fire or heater. This overheating will literally cook the leather & cause it to become stiff & brittle. The best technique is to ensure that dry room temperature air can circulate inside the boots.



What should you do if your shoes or boots get wet? The first thing to consider is to stuff newspaper inside the footwear to wick out water. Change newspaper stuffing twice. The less water absorbed by leather, the longer it will last & the more comfortable you'll be. Wet leather will become brittle as it dries.

Once your shoes are wet, they should be dried as soon as possible with room temperature dry air (Between 70-95 degrees Fahrenheit or 20-35 degrees Centigrade). If you're in a situation where you can't properly dry your boots, wear them in a dry area until they can dry out a bit before you take them off.

If you let the boots sit in a wet condition for days without drying out, they can become moldy. This isn't good for the boot, mold or mildew is nearly impossible to get rid of.

Tip #5 Shoe Bags

When traveling, use shoe bags; this will prevent the soiling from getting in touch with your clothing.

Tip #6 Care of Sole

Once in a week please inspect the sole of your safety footwear. clean the same with a brush & inspect for crack, sign of wear out, embedded metal chips, nails & other foreign material. If found remove them as embedded metal can interfere with electrical properties of your footwear.

Tip #7 Care of In Sock:

Do not change your insock without consulting your safety officer as it might be having antistatic properties. Similarly do not put additional sock/orthotics without consulting your safety footwear manufacturer.

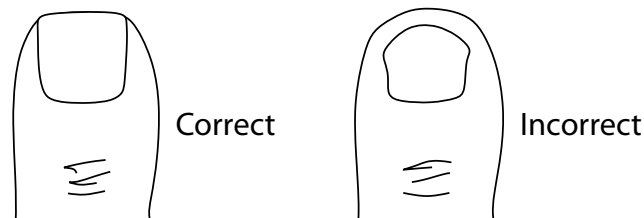
Tip #8 Avoid Heat

Always keep shoes away from direct heat to prevent the leather from drying out. Leather should always dry naturally.

How Should I Care for My Feet?

Feet are subject to a great variety of skin & nail disorders. Workers can avoid many by following simple rules of foot care:

- Wash feet daily with soap, rinse thoroughly & dry, especially between the toes.



- Trim toenails straight across & not too short. Do not cut into the corners.
- Wear clean socks & change them daily. Some feet sweat more than others & are more prone to athlete's foot. Again, following a few simple guidelines may help;
- Use foot powder.
- See a doctor for persistent ingrown toenails, calluses, corns, fungal infection & more serious conditions such as flat feet & arthritis.

Remember to practice safety; don't learn it by accident.



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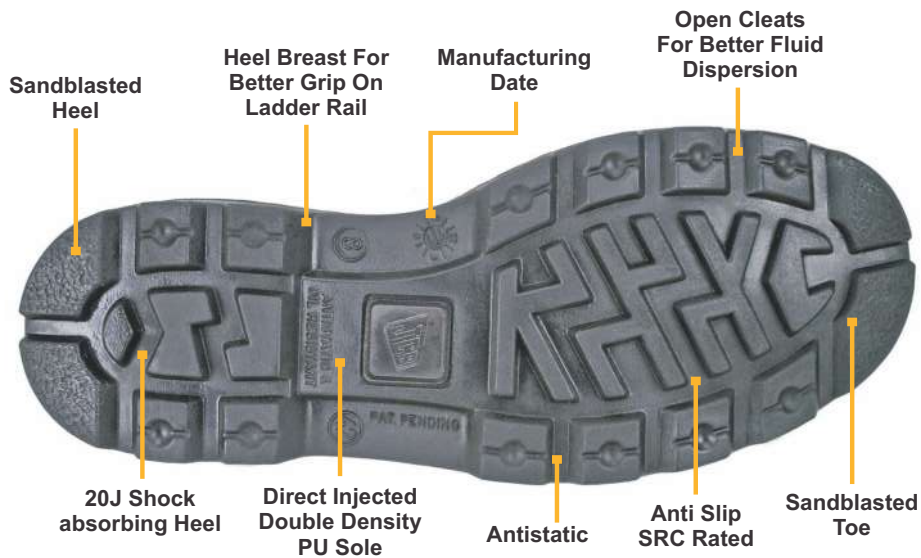
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